

## Today's News - Monday, December 8, 2008

- ArcSpace brings us an eyeful of Ito's Berkeley Art Museum.
- Bayley takes his turn at Duany's rant against British architects: he's "correct to stigmatize the profession for its often crass indulgence in showboating...but to suggest a remedy might be found in the counterfeit design and cack-handed pastiche of Poundbury is dismaying."
- Architecture and the creative economy in the Philippines: it's time to stop losing its "creatives" to foreign firms.
- A Saudi architect calls for Foster and Hadid to keep hands off Mecca.
- Federal grants for blighted neighborhoods was the good news - the bad news: tough choices and frustration because of the small sums involved.
- Report says U.K.'s BRE Green Guide is flawed - but not all agree.
- Nadel on balancing design excellence and building security at new U.S. embassies: Berlin is a good example.
- Russell minces no words about what he thinks of the new Capitol Visitor Center (ouch!).
- But he finds rare "sculptural drama with finesse" in a new hotel that "billows above beat-up tenement buildings in Manhattan's gentrifying East Village."
- Vinoly's Battersea plans under siege (again) for ruining heritage views (but artist impression show the real picture?).
- Not all are thrilled with the budget (so far) for his University of Arizona Flandrau Science Center, either.
- D'Arcy finds Gehry's AGO "refreshingly discreet" and "evidence that he can work as effectively with restraint as he can with his flourishes."
- Campbell finds a boathouse "a model of form and function," "exuberant," and "a joy."
- An extensive Q&A with Ando, an icon and iconoclast.
- Sad news indeed: U.K.'s Architecture Week officially shelved.
- An eyeful of the \$55,000 Port-a-bach relocatable home - good for vacations or disaster relief (and very green).
- A landscape architect calls for a re-think of asphalt and how to make "asphalt spaces into real landscapes that we can engage with as human beings."
- Glancey's reflections on Woolworths.
- Lubell takes a tour with some architects building the impossible in Second Life (too bad he didn't visit ArcSpace land, where there's some serious design going on).

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I'll show you a real carbuncle, Charles: No expression exists in the architectural vocabulary to describe the depressing style of Poundbury...Andrés Duany...is correct to stigmatise the profession for its often crass indulgence in showboating...but to suggest a remedy might be found in the counterfeit design and cack-handed pastiche of Poundbury is dismaying. By Stephen Bayley - Observer (UK)

Architecture and the creative economy: KPO/CPO (knowledge or creative outsource offices) are growing so fast that they...recruit seniors and even juniors in programs like architecture, landscape architecture, engineering and design...Local architecture and design companies are losing hundreds of creatives to these firms or to overseas companies every month...What we need to do — architects or otherwise — is to create a better world for ourselves, here in our own land...- The Philippine Star

Norman Foster must keep hands off Mecca, insists Muslim architect...Sami Angawi, an expert of Islamic architecture in Mecca and Medina, said he was "surprised and upset" to learn of confidential plans...in which the holiest Islamic city would be redesigned by "outsiders"...The scheme to redevelop the mosque suggests his battle will likely be lost. -- Foster + Partners; Zaha Hadid - The Times (UK)

Housing-Crisis Grants Force Cities to Make Tough Choices: The federal program to redevelop neighborhoods blighted amid the housing crisis is barely up and running. But already, many localities are frustrated by the small sums involved. [slide show] - Wall Street Journal

Green Guide 'flawed', says lobby group: Report says Building Research Establishment (BRE) Green Guide is likely to worsen buildings' environmental impact...green credentials of new housing and the 2012 Olympics could suffer because of serious flaws with the official guide to specifying eco-friendly materials...- BD/Building Design (UK)

Balancing Design Excellence and Building Security at New U.S. Embassies: The new U.S. embassy in Berlin...illustrates how sensitivity to site, architectural design, sustainability, local building codes, and security criteria can be skillfully merged in a single facility. By Barbara A. Nadel, FAIA -- Moore Ruble Yudell; Gruen Associates [images] - AIArchitect

Congress Builds Itself a \$621 Million Bunker: ...the new Capitol Visitor Center reminds you of a stone-slathered ballroom in a convention hotel...There's no sense of place or occasion -- certainly not a square inch of inspiration. By James S. Russell -- RTKL; Ralph Appelbaum Associates - Bloomberg News

New York Hotel Wiggles, Shines, Stands Out: Like a spinnaker frozen in glass, the 21-story Cooper Square Hotel billows above beat-up tenement buildings in Manhattan's gentrifying East Village...sculptural drama with finesse...design of such thoroughness and distinction remains so rare... By James S. Russell -- Carlos Zapata; Antonio Citterio [image, links] - Bloomberg News

World Heritage fears raised over Vinoly's Battersea plans: Community group claims eco-tower will ruin the historic views of Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament...spokesman for developer...has played down the claims, saying the group's artist impressions do not show the real picture. [image] - The Architects' Journal (UK)

University of Arizona outlay for Flandrau Science Center near \$13 million: City taxpayers foot big bills for travel, scrapped designs...final schematic design will be completed soon...with the center opening by 2012. -- Rafael Viñoly; Ralph Appelbaum [images] - Arizona Daily Star

Gehry's (Belated) Hometown Triumph: Art Gallery of Ontario...delivers surprises from outside his signature design vocabulary. This isn't what some critics have called his logo-tecture. While dramatic in places, the \$276 million renovation can be refreshingly discreet...the AGO is evidence that he can work as effectively with restraint as he can with his flourishes. By David D'Arcy - Wall Street Journal

Boathouse is a model of form and function: A break with the Victorian past and walls that move set a new standard...the architecture of the exuberant new Community Rowing Boathouse in Brighton is such a joy. This is a building that's happy to look fresh, new, democratic, and up-to-date... By Robert Campbell -- Anmahian Winton [image] - Boston Globe

Icon and iconoclast: Tadao Ando's architectural vision goes way beyond buildings. [Q&A, slide show] - Japan Times

Architecture Week officially shelved: Arts Council England (ACE) said it was now looking at a 'new policy for art, architecture and the built environment' -- hammering the final nail into the coffin for the national week-long jamboree. - The Architects' Journal (UK)

The US\$55,000 Port-a-bach relocatable home (in a shipping container): ...not just rugged...it's as easy to transport internationally as it is to transport locally...has low environmental impact and can connect to local utilities or be entirely power, water and sewer independent. -- Cecille Bonifait/William Giesen/Atelier Workshop [images, links] - Gizmag (Australia)

Architect finds beauty in the asphalt jungle: www.onasphalt.com is starting to bring designers, students, and industry professionals together with the goal of rethinking the material..."There are ways to make asphalt spaces into real landscapes that we can engage with as human beings." -- Paula Meijerink/Wanted - Boston Globe

Wrapped up in Woolies: For almost a century Woolworths was one of Britain's most famous institutions. Jonathan Glancey reflects on the high-street veteran's distinctive design and unique charm [images, links] - Guardian (UK)

Original Sim: For the architects of Second Life, Reality Bites. Sam Lubell takes a tour. -- Scope Cleaver; Lester Clark/PRP; Designer Dingson; D B Bailey/David Denton; Jon Brouchoud; Terry Beaubois [images, links] - New York Times Style Magazine

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